



UNIVERSIDADE DE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA
FACULTADE DE FILOLOXÍA

Grao en Lingua e Literatura Inglesas

Not for Old Fogies: A Look at the Flapper in Fitzgerald's Literary
Production

Traballo de Fin de Grao escrito por

Aitana Castro Coego

Baixo a dirección de

Patricia Fra López

Curso Académico 2018/1019



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1. Summary



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Resumo [na lingua en que se vai redactar o TFG; entre 1000 e 2000 caracteres]:

In the aftermath of the First World War, a new chapter in the North American history was being written. Together with the economic prosperity came the social, artistic and cultural changes, which portray the characteristics of the upcoming era: The Roaring Twenties. The winds of change spread a new ideology among the American population, and so a new woman emerged: the Flapper.

The aim of this dissertation is to review F. S. Fitzgerald's literary production concerning the appearance of the figure of the Flapper. The essay has been organized in three main sections. The first part gives a brief overview of the North American History during the 1920's and the emergence of a new life style. It will then go on to describe the figure of the flapper: influences, behaviour and appearance. Famous Flappers and their relationship with the fine arts also to be explained in this part. The second section examines three Fitzgerald's literary works concerning Flappers, paying attention to female characters: two collections of short stories: *Flappers and Philosophers* and *All the Sad Young Men*; and a novel *The Great Gatsby*. Finally, the last part deals with the end of the Flapper Era as a symbol of woman's freedom.

Therefore, returning to the hypothesis posed at the beginning, the object of this essay is to portray the representation of the Flapper as a new woman, not only in the American society, but also in Fitzgerald's literary production.

Santiago de Compostela, 05 de Novembro de 2018.

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SRA. DECANA DA FACULTADE DE FILOLOXÍA (Presidenta da Comisión de Títulos de Grao)

2. Introduction

Once the sad days of World War I were gone, thousands of North American citizens rushed headlong into the upcoming era: The Roaring Twenties. The United States were launched towards an upswing of economic prosperity, which translated into social and cultural changes. As the 1920's began, these shifts became particularly important for the development of the new role of women in society. Empowerment, financial independence and sexual liberation were some of the objectives to achieve by a section of the female community. Along these lines and as a way of self-expression, 'women embraced the new freedoms, cutting their hair, applying makeup, and tossing out dowdy fashions of the past for shorter skirts and slinkier more formfitting attire' (Time-Life 11). All in all, the nature and aesthetics of the New Woman of the 1920's were a source of inspiration for many writers and authors of the decade.

The most outstanding literary figure of this period is undoubtedly Francis Scott Fitzgerald. Thanks to the publication of his novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925), the author became part of the history of North American literature as the 'premier analyst of the American Flapper' and 'spokesperson of the Jazz Age' (Zeitiz 29). Precisely, this dissertation will focus on the literary production of F. Scott Fitzgerald for two reasons: on the one hand, because his literary characters were based on real life people that faithfully show the reality of the decade; and, on the other hand, because his short stories opened up the Flapper lifestyle to the general public. Additionally, throughout these years in my degree, less attention has been paid to study the female characters, than the male protagonists, in Fitzgerald's literary production. Therefore, the main objective will be to analyze three books written by F. Scott Fitzgerald, paying attention to the female characters in order to get a deeper insight into the figure of the Flapper in

his literary production. The aim of this analysis is to have a broader understanding in the situation of the New American Woman of the 1920's represented through the flappers of Fitzgerald's stories.

The literary works chosen for this purpose have been: two collections of short stories titled *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920) and *All the Sad Young Men* (1926); and, the novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925). These books have been selected because they clearly show the different types of female characters included in Fitzgerald's literary production. Moreover, in the case of the novel, the flapper-like women happen to be the most complex within his authoring.

The theoretical framework and, therefore, the historical context of this dissertation are based on three studies titled *The 1920's: American Popular Culture Through History* (2004), *TIME-LINE: The Roaring 20's* (2017) and *Flapper: a Madcap Story of Sex, Style, Celebrity, and the Women Who Made America Modern* (2007). The three literary works include an useful approach to the history of the decade and help to develop a wider perspective on American culture. Additionally, some concepts developed by Sarah Beebe Fryer on her study titled *Fitzgerald's New Women: Harbingers of Change* (1988) will be used, in order to analyze the female figures from Fitzgerald's books.

This dissertation is divided into three main sections. The first of them corresponds to the historical framework, in which the main events that took place after World War I are explained. In addition, within this section there is a subcategory that focuses on the figure of the Flapper and the historical context of the 1920s in the United States. Appearance, manners and lifestyle are some of the aspects explained and expanded in this subdivision. The crux of second part of this study deals with the analysis of the above-mentioned literary works, paying special attention to female

characters, particularly, to those corresponding to the figure of the Flapper. Lastly, the main conclusions extracted from this dissertation will be explained on a separate chapter.

Recent studies show that the figure of the Flapper is still a prominent subject of discussion. One of the main issues concerning these women is the question of their physical appearance and what it represented. Carolyn Mair suggests in her book *The Psychology of Fashion* (2018), that as women became more liberated during the 1920's, they discarded their restrictive clothing and adopted the androgynous flapper style (Mair 9). This could mean that they expressed themselves through fashion, and that their sense of style was based on their desire to differentiate themselves from others. Thereby, many historians and authors agree that fashion has a direct link to the various attitudes of women because not every woman followed the flapper trend (Johnson 2). Indeed, this divided women according to their economic, cultural and social position; something that the flapper-type of women took advantage of in order to dress and act outside the social norms of the previous decade (Johnson 2).

3. Historical Context: North America after the First World War

Before focusing on the Roaring 20's and the figure of the Flapper, it is crucial to acknowledge the post-war situation of the United States. The end of the First World War brought many changes that affected Americans in all levels: economic, political and sociological. Therefore, knowing the historical context will enhance our understanding of the circumstances in which the figure of the Flapper emerged.

From an economic point of view, the end of the First World War developed into a serious economic recession: increase in unemployment and decrease in consumption. This was a very short period, because in 1922 the manufacturing industries started to produce automobiles, radios and other consumer goods (Drowne and Huber 5). These early successes may also deal with the creation of the 'buy now, pay later' plans, which allowed most American families to pay a few dollars a month for all sort of consumer goods (Drowne and Huber 5). In general terms, it can be defined as a way to enable families to pay for certain commodities that they could not afford otherwise. This economic flexibility translated into a greater number of sales and therefore, the increase of employment opportunities. However, not all Americans reaped the benefits: farmers, textile workers, coal miners and small merchants were put aside by the growth of larger companies such as automobile manufacturer Ford (Drowne and Huber 6). This new system favoured large companies which obtained great benefits during this period.

There is a strong connection between the economic and the political changes that took place after World War I. As it was previously mentioned, the lives of most Americans improved as a result of mass production and technological advancements

but, other forces influenced the ordinary everyday life (Drowne and Huber 7). Among the concerns of many citizens in the United States were Communism and the racial tensions with the African American community, which led to violent clashes between people of different races, religions and political beliefs (Drowne and Huber 7). One of the main events related to Communism was the Red Scare, which was considered a public hysteria among most Americans who feared the arrival of Communism in the United States (Schmidt 300). Remarkably, this is related to the Wall Street explosion on September 16th of 1920, in which thirty-eight people died and consequently, the blame fell on Communists (Drowne and Huber 7). This increased the tensions between both groups and spread fear among Americans.

An even greater source of concern was related with the racial and ethnic differences between white Native Americans and African Americans. It was the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920's which aggravated the already strained race relations in the United States (Drowne and Huber 10). Despite the fact that the group was already formed it was not until the 1920's that it obtained great and rapid growth. Consequently, it is not surprising that within a few years it had established a minimal presence in more than 1,000 communities throughout the nation (McVeigh 13). The upshot of this radicalization could be the foundation of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914 by Marcus Garvey (Cronon 62). During the 1920's thousands of African Americans joined these and other Black Nationalist organizations to celebrate race pride and racial self-determination (Drowne and Huber 12). Many of these organizations helped most African American families, who were tired of their situation and racial discrimination. As a form of self-definition the term New Negro became popular during the 1920's. Many African Americans saw themselves as New Negroes since many of them escaped racial conventions and fought

for a more egalitarian future. It is also important to note that the majority of these middle-class African American had self-expression, self-assertiveness and self-determination impulses (Drowne and Huber 13). Related to this idea of freedom and being able to give an opinion, it is also during this time that women got the right to vote. When the Nineteenth Amendment was approved in 1920, it stated that ‘the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex’ (The Constitution of the United States 31). Arguably, this was an enormous achievement for the development of the new modern woman.

The sociological overview of the United States after World War I is widely considered to be the most important sphere. The reason for this is that, both economic and political changes have an impact on social relationships. In addition, the conception of women and their role in the American society was a question of particular importance during the 1920’s. In addition, within this period, most American citizens were concerned with two more issues: Immigration and National Prohibition.

Between 1890 and 1914, nearly 17 million immigrants moved to the United States, most of them from European countries such as Russia, Italy and Germany (Drowne and Huber 8). In their majority, these immigrants travelled for economic reasons, and they were not welcomed by the anti-immigration organizations. Although immigration levels reduced during the course of the war, the flow of immigrants returned to its pre-war state when World War I ended (Drowne and Huber 8). Anti-foreigner associations did not agree with the immigration policies of the time, and they demanded stricter rules for the new migrants. The issue was not addressed until 1924, when President Coolidge declared that ‘America must be kept American. For this purpose, it is necessary to continue a policy of restricted immigration.’ (Greenberg 83) Hence, millions of Americans supported a more severe legislation to difficult the

possibilities of taking up residence in the United States (Drowne and Huber 8). The massive influx of immigrants may have been one of the main factors for the increase of crime in the United States during the 1920's. Together with National Prohibition laws, it led to a dramatic rise in the scope of organized crime with mobsters such as Al 'Scarface' Capone in Chicago, Salvatore 'Lucky' Luciano in New York or George Remus in Cincinnati (Drowne and Huber 13). All three of them had migratory background and were able to take advantage of it for their personal benefit.

Regarding the issue of National Prohibition, it is worth noting its contribution to shape the sociological panorama of the 1920's. It was a period in the history of the United States between 1920 and 1933, in which the production, transportation, sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages was prohibited. The failure to comply with said law resulted at first, in six months in prison and a fine up to 1,000 dollars but later, the penalty was changed to five years in jail and the payment of 10,000 dollars (Drowne and Huber 13). Taking into account the penalizations that required to be face if the law was not abided by, it is not surprising that the majority of the population of the United States discontinued or, at least, reduced their drinking of alcoholic beverages. Other factors that may have influenced the decrease in consumption were the respect for the Constitution, pro-temperance sympathy or lack of funds to buy in the black market liquor (Drowne and Huber 13). However, as stated by K. Drowne and P. Huber:

'Although beer, wine, and spirits became more difficult to obtain during National Prohibition, and many people did drink less, thirsty Americans could still usually secure whatever kind of liquor they desired' (14)

This suggests that the consumption of alcoholic beverages remained a regular activity for the ordinary citizen. Thereby, most Americans could still get alcohol in the black market or in clandestine bars. However, it was much more expensive because it was derived from contraband and clandestine factories. Despite the price increase of alcoholic beverages, the quality declined significantly since many of them were adulterated with water, dyes and flavourings (Drowne and Huber 14). This meant a greater number of benefits for smugglers and illegal alcohol producers. As a consequence, due to the unpleasant flavour of the liquors, cocktails became very popular during Prohibition because many consumers of alcoholic beverages had to mix them with ginger ale, tonic water or fruit juices (Drowne and Huber 14). It also became fashionable for middle-class women to go and drink alcohol at the illegal cocktail bars, as long as they had a male companion (Drowne and Huber 14). Indeed, this was an enormous change of mentality, because before the 1920's, women who drank alcohol in bars were treated mostly as prostitutes. Notwithstanding, not all women shared the same opinion on the subject, because there were women who supported National Prohibition and others who repelled it. As explained by David R. Kenneth 'while prohibition women and repeal women shared, for the most part, a common domestic philosophy, there were important differences between the two groups' (3). After the Eighteenth Amendment and the National Prohibition were approved, many people believed that their vision of a liquor-free world would soon be a reality (Kenneth 9). However, as it was previously mentioned, the results were quite the opposite, which was not welcomed by a large proportion of the population. Some of the effects of the entry into force of said law were the growth of organised crime, an epidemic of corruption among public officials and people from all classes ignoring the regulation of National Prohibition (Kenneth 10).

Now, the term Roaring Twenties refers to the years comprehended between 1920 and 1929, which supposed a great commercial growth for the United States. The economic prosperity favoured the development of large businesses and it meant a great opportunity for many American citizens. As it was previously mentioned, only a few of them were able to make great fortunes, but the average Americans bought new cars and home appliances that they could not afford before (Time-Life 6). As a result of this atmosphere of freedom and opportunities, many young teenagers in the United States began to distance themselves from their parents' Victorian morals and embraced a more liberated lifestyle (Time-Life 6, 64). Consequently, coinciding with the source previously mentioned, 'much of what we associate with the 1920s reflects the passions of a youthful generation in revolt against the stodgy rules of its elders' (57). Hence, they spent a generous amount of time attending cocktail parties, dancing to Jazz music, smoking and drinking in clandestine clubs.

Both men and women of all races, religions and social classes met at these private parties and clandestine clubs to drink and have fun. It was during this time that the concept of dating, as it is understood today, was born (Time-Life 62). According to this new pattern of social relationships, it was common to have a romance with somebody without having any expectations of marriage (Time-Life 64). This was unthinkable during the previous years, in which relationships were considered a commitment to marriage.

The soundtrack of parties across the American Nation was a mixture of jazz music, ragtime and blues (Time-Life 6). This is why the decade of the Roaring Twenties is also considered to be the Jazz Age. Originally from New Orleans, this music genre

made audiences from all corners of the United States dance and, it became the most popular music style of the time. Beyond being a musical genre, jazz music also introduced new dance steps to the choreographies of most partygoers. Some of dance movements were the black bottom, the Lindy hop, the shimmy and the popular Charleston (Time-Life 78). These steps were not for old fogies, because due to its fast and lively nature, many conservative parents thought that they were scandalous and inappropriate. However, this could not and did not stop the younger generations.

As a consequence of this behaviour, corresponding to the editors of Time-Life, ‘the great symbol of this rebellion and its most vivid expression was a cheeky group of women who became known as flappers’ (57).

3.1 The Figure of the Flapper

It remains unclear how and when the term *flapper* made its way into the American vernacular (Zeitiz 18). Although many historians and linguists are not able to set the start date for its use, it is believed that it was not until the aftermath of World War I that it became a frequently used word. In fact, most modern dictionaries associated the term *flapper* with the period which corresponded between the 1920’s and 1930’s. An example of this, is the definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary Online which states that a *flapper* is ‘(in the 1920s) a fashionable young woman intent on enjoying herself and flouting conventional standards of behaviour’.¹ This corresponds with the lifestyle and libertine principles that writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald and actresses like Clara Bow popularized in books and films (Zeitiz 19, 20).

¹ ‘Flapper’. Def. n.1. Oxford English Dictionary Online, Oxford University Press, March 2019. Online.

Despite becoming the most representative figure of the period, it seemed to most that the flapper was related with every social illness in the American society: immodest fashion, smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol beverages and dancing with several men in steamy jazz clubs (Zeitz 20). These are qualities that delight and fascinate many present-day readers, but it was not the same case during the 1920's. Nobody could escape the debate, and it is proved that contemporaries of the flapper were divided into those who feared her, those who loved her and those who took her as a matter of course (Zeitz 20). The hatred towards these women triggered the Florida State Legislature to consider the prohibition of the term *flapper*, since many people saw them as disgraceful and radical (Florida State Legislature 22 qtd. in Zeitz 20). All these reactions are a consequence of how new the 'New Woman' really was in America, and how conservative people reacted to this figure (Zeitz 20).

Despite being loved or hated, the flapper was indisputably the main focus of public debate during the 1920s. Everything related to these women was meticulously analyzed, from their striking clothing to their dance steps and drinking habits. Therefore, it was no surprise to find headlines that reported terrible stories about young women who followed the flapper trend which was considered to be a detriment to their lives (Zeitz 20). Many of them even committed suicide since conservative people criticized them and attacked them. The New York Times published the 4th of June in 1923, the story of a young teenager from Chicago who committed suicide after her old fashioned mother forbade her to dress like a flapper (New York Times 7 qtd. in Zeitz 20). This particular case reflects the change of mentality from one generation to another: the strict mother who retained Victorian traditional morals and the daughter who followed the flapper trend and its liberal perception of life. Consequently, it comes as no surprise that many elders saw the flapper as a radical and decadent social figure.

At the same time, not everyone thought that the flapper was a symbol that represented civilization's decline (Zeitz 20). In the years following the First World War, many American citizens read a newspaper called *The New Republic* in which one of its editors wrote an interview titled *Flapper Jane* (Zeitz 21). Bruce Bliven, the author of the column, interviewed a young teenager named Jane, with whom he talked about her appearance, her morals and even, about Feminism. The focal point of the dialogue was on the analysis of the situation of women and, how values were changing in the American society at the time. This interview can be classified as a subjective text, because the author openly shows his own opinion regarding the different topics. Few of the main questions presented to Jane were about the flapper sense of style, something that was very criticized during the decade. Bruce Bliven asked her: 'Do the morals go with the clothes? Or the clothes with the morals? Or are they independent?' (67). In this way, the author questioned whether the values of a person have direct link to clothing style or not. This was a very controversial issue, because during the 1920's police officers could arrest women for exposing their bodies with short bodysuits. These ordinances satisfied the conservative part of the population, because they thought that morality was determined by the length of a woman's skirt. Along those lines, the author concluded that:

'If they should elect to go naked nothing is more certain than that naked they will go, while from the sidelines to which he has been relegated mere man is vouchsafed permission only to pipe a feeble Hurrah! Hurrah!' (67)

Both quotations use the flapper sense of style to question their relationship with traditional morals and their male counterparts. The author made a feminist approach to the issue, not only in this part, but throughout the entire interview, because he considered

women to be 'just as good as men' (Blinven 67). Finally, it should be noted that it is not known if Flapper Jane really existed or if she was only an invention of the author himself (Zeititz 21). Either way, Bruce Blinven's interview helped many American citizens to have a general overview of the matter and the intricate principles behind the flapper's lifestyle.

What one usually visualizes when thinking about the 1920's, are pictures comparable to John Held's illustrations of the flapper (Yellis 44). Furthermore, it is not a superficial coincidence that most of these mental images have a female protagonist, just as Held's drawings (Yellis 44). In fact, this shows how important it was for women the way in which they were perceived by men, by other women and by themselves (Yellis 44). As it was previously mentioned, women changed their appearance in order to change the way in which they wanted to be observed, and this shows how important perception was at the time (Yellis 44). This is related to the flapper style and how these women expressed themselves through fashion. Therefore, social and psychological factors intervene in this question and the deeper values behind it (Yellis 48). So, when debating on the flapper appearance, it is not only about short hair, excessive makeup and bodysuits, but also about the symbolism behind these elements. Looking at the fashion tendencies during the Middle Ages in the West explains why the flapper vogue was understood as a break with all the above (Yellis 48).

From the women who arrived to the New World during colonization, to those who participated in World War I, all of them shared a common trait: their long hair. Whether worn up or down, natural or wigged, powdered or oiled, women's hair had been long for hundreds of years (Yellis 48). But of course, this pattern did not apply to the flapper haircut. These women wore their hair short bob style, something that was considered quite radical even after the war (Yellis 48). However, it was a long-standing process, because even though this haircut has its origins in the early Twentieth century, it was not

until the 1920s that it became popular. Joshua Zeitz proves this by saying ‘(...) high school yearbooks didn’t record a widespread popularity of signature flapper styles like bobbed hair until as late as 1924’ (Montana 46 qtd. in Zeitz 95). Moreover, many of them wore a cloche style hat which covered most of their head and forehead (Yellis 48). This type of hat was characterized by having a helmet shape because it was fitted and, impossible to wear with long hair.

Since the 1920’s there was a rapid rise in the use of cosmetics because it played a very important role in the life on many women. However, it was very different during the 19th Century because only a few stage actresses wore makeup (Zeitz 217). For the most part, conservative people treated them like immoral prostitutes since traditional beliefs held that makeup was used to conceal one's inner spirit (Zeitz 217). Generally speaking, Victorian moralists believed that if a woman wore makeup it was because she had something to hide so therefore, cosmetics were seen as something negative. But, everything changed during the 1920’s. The taste for a cleaner and more nurturing appearance began to expand and, many Americans were interested in learning about self care. This was a great opportunity for cosmetic companies, which urged the New Woman to ‘find themselves’ through makeup and, so flappers did (Zeitz 219). The characteristic flapper face focused on the eyes and lips as opposed to their smooth and pale complexion. To complete the look, most flappers tweezed their eyebrows to make them thinner and longer, so their eyes caught all the attention. Clara Bow’s ‘bee-stung’ lips were an ideal for many women who tried to make their mouths look smaller and puckered with red lipstick (Yellis 48). There is no doubt that flappers considered cosmetics a way of self-expression and freedom therefore, it was very common to see them playing with makeup and using different techniques.

One aspect that should be taken into account when analyzing fashion trends of the 1920s is that, there was no textile industry as we understand it today. Most American women made their own clothes at home and, this trend continued for a very long time (Zeitz 176). Indeed, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton made a report in American manufacturers, which revealed that four-fifths of the clothes in the United States during 1791 were homemade (Hamilton 160 qtd. in Zeitz 176). However, a second analysis conducted twenty years later, showed that things were slowly changing. The investigation determined that the percentage of homemade clothes dropped to two-thirds and that the rest were designed and hand crafted by dressmakers and tailors (Zeitz 176). Progressively thanks to technological advances like the sewing machine, producing clothing in large quantities became more and more affordable for textile manufacturers. The replacement of the complicated Victorian-era dress also made cheaper producing new styles and, the boom in ready-to-wear clothing arrived (Zeitz 179). These new modern pieces were characterized by their comfortable and lightweight design; leaving annoying corsets and heavy dresses behind. In regards to the clothes flappers wore, Kenneth A. Yellis insures that:

‘Her dresses were tight, straight, short and rather plain, with a very low waist, usually about the hips, low necks for evening wear, and short sleeves, or none at all. She wore nude-colored silk or rayon stockings which she often rolled below the knee, or omitted altogether in hot weather, and high-heeled cut-out slippers or pumps.’ (48)

This type of clothing became the favorite of many flappers, not only for its comfort but also because it resembled what was previously considered a party dress. In

addition, these patterns emphasized a new type of silhouette that was based on grace and slenderness (Zeitz 140). The flapper redefined the feminine form with the help of designers like Coco Chanel, who outfitted the New Woman for the modern age (Zeitz 140). By eliminating the corset once and for all, they achieved continuity between the torso and chest, coming up with a new silhouette (Zeitz 169). So, in order to achieve the boyish linear figure and cover her feminine lines, the flapper continued to modify the natural shape of her body by using breast flatteners (Zeitz 172). Despite being the favorite trend of many flappers, baggy dresses and slimness bodies were not everyone's cup of tea. To satisfy the needs of all women, designer Madeleine Vionnet created clothing pieces that slightly emphasized women's natural curves (Zeitz 173). Her technique was based on cutting the material against the grain and making dresses that assumed the shape of the body and not the other way around (Zeitz 173).

Surprisingly, although flappers liked to play with their silhouette and clothes, this was not the case when talking about color. Basic shades that resembled simplicity and elegance, like black and beige, were essential in every woman's closet during the 1920's (Yellis 50). This type of garments allowed the creation of many different looks by adding attractive accessories such as gloves, handbags, hats and jewelry (Yellis 50).

Obviously, not all flappers looked the same, nor all of them followed the same fashion trends but, generally speaking their appearance was a mixture of feminine and delicate elements with others more masculine (Yellis 50). This enabled them to create class consciousness in a democratic society, sexual curiosity in a puritanical one and individualism in a mass culture (Yellis 62). Furthermore, many American women perceived fashion as an opportunity for personal self-expression and female empowerment. Their clothing did not fit into conventional standards, and so did their lifestyle.

With the purpose of breaking away from the Victorian morals, many flappers chose to live an unconventional lifestyle. As described before, with the end of World War I and their incorporation into the labor market, many women managed to run their own lives. This economic emancipation meant a great opportunity to show what they were capable of achieving. The majority of them accomplished their goals, since they were able to have successful careers or jobs previously considered 'masculine'. Now, women were competing with men in the business world (Yellis 46). In agreement with this, most flappers in the United States belonged to the upper middle class, what enabled them to keep up with their excessive lifestyle, full of expensive clothes and luxurious cars. However, they did not spend all their money on material goods. Whereas bars and saloons had been a male preserve, now many flappers and women in the United States enjoyed having a drink with them (Yellis 46). As a result of National Prohibition, many thirsty Americans had to organize private parties in order to consume alcoholic beverages. This was the favorite environment for many flappers, since it was a place where they could dance, smoke and drink as everyone else. Now that men and women were spending more time together, they freely experimented with intimacy and romance (Zeitz 61). Unlike their parents, many young teenagers treated sex as matter of course and, premarital intercourses were quite common. Thus, 'petting parties' became famous among young Americans. A study made to 177 college women revealed that 92 percent of them admitted to go to these parties, 'spooning' and 'necking' (Smith 49 qtd. in Zeitz 61). This was extraordinary because for many years, woman's sexuality was confined to family life and reproduction. Margaret Sanger, a famous birth control advocate, urged women to triumph over 'repression' and chase 'the greatest possible expression and fulfillment of their desires upon the highest possible plane' (Zeitz 81; Sanger 117). Following her ideas, many women in America experimented with birth control and their sexuality, because as

Margaret Sanger explained 'sex life must be stripped of its fear. This is one of the great functions of contraceptives' (115). Although the new sexual ethic was liberating for many people, young women observed that the old double standard was still applied (Zeitz 61). Most of the population put the blame of this situation on young girls and their revealing clothing. This is what Mrs. George Rose, an itinerant evangelist, said about the issue:

'Modern fashions, exposed necks, bare arms, yes, even exposed legs ... you say they are worn innocently, with no thought of appeal to the lust of men. I wish I could think that this were so.' (Montana 55 qtd. in Zeitz 61, 62)

On the other hand, the libertine principles of these young teenagers would not make them forget about marriage. This was a very controversial question, because naturally not everyone shared the same ideas. For some people, conjugal union and child rearing could interrupt physical and long-lasting relationships, while others could not accept this new conception of marriage (Zeitz 133). A research on this topic addressed that between 1870's and 1920's, half of all female college graduates rejected marriage, compared with only a tenth of all the American women (Smith-Rosenberg 253 qtd. in Zeitz 133). Taking into account the profile of the women who followed the non-marriage direction, one comes to the conclusion that the main reasons for their decision might be related with their economic power, social status and professional career. At the same time, other women decided to get married, perhaps because the new sexual and romantic climate favored equality or, because it was no longer difficult to juggle their careers with family life (Zeitz 136). At the end, marriage was the ultimate goal for many flappers.

Regardless of their decision, many of them became very powerful and are still admired today. These outstanding flappers belonged to different professional fields but those who obtained greater recognition were actresses, designers and celebrities.

Considered to be the first American flapper, Zelda Sayre was just a teenager when she met her future husband, F. Scott Fitzgerald. Soon to be heralded as the premier analyst of the new American woman, Fitzgerald would turn Zelda into the flapper prototype (Zeitz 43, 63). Actually, she was the inspiration for many of Scott's female characters, like Rosalind Connage on his first novel *This Side of Paradise* (Zeitz 76). However, Zelda will not settle with her role as muse and wife and, in early 1922, she wrote a review on her husband's second novel *The Beautiful and Damned* (Zeitz 76). It was published on the New York Tribune under her married name Zelda Fitzgerald with the title *Friend Husband's Latest* (Zeitz 76). In this commentary she revealed that Scott had lifted edited portions of her letters and diaries (Zeitz 76). This shows that not only was Zelda his inspiration, but also source of bibliographical content in his literary works. Characterized by her vivacious and non-conformist personality, Zelda belonged to the first generation that rejected Victorian values and redefined womanhood (Zeitz 79). Hers was not a lone voice since many American women followed her philosophy (Zeitz 84). Pleasure, enjoyment and freedom were some of the principles in which her life was supported. Zelda went down in history as an icon of the 1920s and remains a source of inspiration for many people. Her name and legacy are still alive thanks to Princess Zelda, from the video game *The Legend of Zelda*, and the TV series *Z: The Beginning of Everything*.

As far as fashion and styling are concerned, the most representative woman of the flapper movement was Coco Chanel. Independent and enterprising, Coco took a job as a shop assistant after a brief stay at a boarding school in Moulins at the age of eighteen

(Zeitz 145). In order to pick up some extra money, during the weekend, she worked for a tailor where she met the person that would change her life forever (Zeitz 145). Etienne Balsan, a wealthy textile baron, helped her make the leap to the lifestyle of the landed elite and, thanks to her talent, she became an outstanding designer (Zeitz 145). She dominated feminine fashion with her designs based on a slender and masculine figure (Zeitz 169). However, it was not until 1923 that Chanel's signature style culminated with the creation of the 'garçonne look', also called 'flapper look' in England and America (Zeitz 170). As it was previously described and according to Joshua Zeitz:

'(...) It featured tubular dresses with dropped or invisible waistlines, high hemlines that crawled up toward the knees, tank tops, straight vertical lines, and intricate decorative beading, topped off with bell-shaped cloche hats.' (170)

Consequently, Chanel's androgynous designs redefined feminine sexuality by blending men's and women's clothes together (Zeitz 171). In effect, the flapper look that Chanel helped pioneer had great success among the new American women who were looking for matching clothing with their new lifestyle (Zeitz 176). She created a new opportunity for women who desired to express themselves through clothes and fashion. The creativity and talent she showed during her life led her to remain the fashion icon she is still today.

While millions of young women turned the pages of magazines in search of the latest flapper fashion tips, the announcement of a scandalous new film attracted everyone's attention (Zeitz 225). *Flaming Youth*, starring Collen Moore as Pat Fentriss, narrated a new story that provided a new kind of role for female actresses (Zeitz 225, 226). As defined by some critics, Moore '(...) plays a flapper the way Scott Fitzgerald

writes one' (Trade Review 2 qtd. in Zeitz 225). The movie became a blockbuster hit as Collen was one of the best paid actresses in Hollywood and, according to Fitzgerald himself, he '(...) was the spark that lit up *Flaming Youth* and, Colleen Moore was the torch' (Moore 294 qtd. in Zeitz 235). But, what really attracted the audience of the 1920's was her dutch-boy bobbed haircut. Without any knowledge of hairdressing, her mother transformed Moore into the collegiate flapper (Zeitz 235). By 1925, more film studios focused their female roles on the figure of the flapper, leading to the discovery of actress Clara Bow. Trying to get away from her financial and family problems, Clara considered cinema a way of self liberation. After winning a Fame and Fortune contest, she was given the opportunity to play a small role in a feature-length film called *Beyond the Rainbow* (Zeitz 251). Despite her hopes, she was cut from the final print but, this would not stop her (Zeitz 251). It didn't take long for her career to take off and, in 1924 she was offered to play a role in Clarence Badger's film *Painted People* starring Collen Moore (Zeitz 251). However, when Clara and Collen started shooting together, it was very obvious that they did not like each other. Taking into account that Moore's husband was the producer of the film, it was somehow suspicious that Clara was replaced by a new actress, after she showed up on set in bandages of a surgery (Zeitz 251, 252). After this incident, they were never seen together again. Nevertheless, her astonishing career and her representations of the naughty flapper made Clara Bow became the 'it girl' of the decade (Zeitz 260).

Sadly, the Roaring Twenties and the flapper lifestyle, came to an end when the stock market collapsed in 1929 (Zeitz 291). Conclusively, with the passing of the Jazz Age, came the passing of the first thoroughly modern American woman (Zeitz 292, 304). Citizens moved on to other topics leaving behind the cocktail-drinking, cigarette-smoking and Charleston-dancing flapper of the 1920's (Zeitz 292). At this point, the Flapper Era was over.

4. The Flapper in Fitzgerald's Literary Production

Much has been written about F. Scott Fitzgerald's interest in history, particularly in the era of momentous social change in which he lived and wrote (Fryer 1). His literary production reflects the gradually shifting status of women, who rejected Victorian patriarchal values after World War I (Fryer 1). Especially significant for upper middle-class women in the United States, the decade of the 1920's inspired the conflicts presented in his novels. Many critics observed that 'Fitzgerald never lost a quality that very few are able to acquire: a sense of living in history.' (Cowley 85 qtd. in Fryer 1) His literary characters and their challenges were based on Scott's friends and family, which made his stories seem authentic and more realistic. Thanks to this particular feature, plenty of his contemporaries were aware of the changing values, lifestyle and aspirations of his generation (Fryer 1). Therefore, it was no surprise that Fitzgerald was known as the spokesman for the flapper movement.

As Fitzgerald's interest in history grew, so did his interest in women and their changing role in society (Fryer 1, 2). His own tendency towards womanizing exposed the point of view of the women in his life, who influenced the development of Scott's female characters (Fryer 1, 2). The two most important aspects that Fitzgerald recognized in the lives of these women, were the 'irresistible urge of boredom and vitality' and 'dignity under suffering' which he captured in characters such as Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald 173 qtd. in Fryer 2). Following those lines, Scott also focused on the New Woman of his generation and, how they enjoyed this period of sexual liberation (Fryer 3). After they gained the right to vote in 1920, their desire for self-determination resulted in a sexual revolution that, gave them the power to decide on their own bodies before, during and after marriage (Fryer 3). Unconventional and empowered, these young

girls aspired to a greater degree of personal autonomy, a characteristic that Scott incorporated into his female characters too (Fryer 3, 4).

However, as determined by Sarah Beebe Fryer in her book *Fitzgerald's New Women: Harbingers of Change* 'although his sexual references are often vague, his topics include premarital sex, abortion, infidelity, incest, and cohabitation without marriage.' (10) As a consequence, Fitzgerald's female characters faced the struggles and confusion caused by their new social relationships. The internal conflicts of these women turned them into complex characters who suffered from low self-esteem, depression, anxiety attacks and even suicidal tendencies (Fryer 17).

Due to his talent of transforming history into fiction, F. Scott Fitzgerald captured the essence of the New American Woman in his literary production, making him the forerunner of the Flapper movement.

4.1 *The Great Gatsby*

Considered to be the great American novel, *The Great Gatsby* (1925) accurately exemplifies the decade of the 1920's in the United States and the role of the New American Woman as its undeniable protagonist. Despite being a novel written by a man, narrated by a male figure and starred by gentlemen, most critics believe that the entire plot revolves around three female characters. Something that Fitzgerald himself would not agree with because he stated in his book *A Life in Letters*, that *The Great Gatsby* '(...) contains no important woman character' (Fitzgerald 315 qtd. in Sanderson 154). Myrtle Wilson, Jordan Baker and Daisy Fay Buchanan represent the different variants of the New Woman within the story. Regardless whether they represent the Flapper lifestyle or a more traditional one, each of them face distinctly their own challenges in life (Flapper Fashion Look Book qtd. in Samkanashvili 47). Arguably, they are as important as the male characters, however most of the time they are represented from a negative perspective, as Fitzgerald's exploitation of the New Woman was always focused on how men perceived women, and not how they saw themselves (Sanderson 144). Thereby, Scott focused the narrative point of view on male consciousness to put forth the female characters (Sanderson 154). In this case, the story is narrated by Nick Carraway, who openly gives his opinion on other characters, influencing the reader's perception. Therefore, it is very likely that the descriptions and characteristics of the female characters have been affected by Nick's point of view. This relates to the idea presented by Jackson R. Bryer who said that *The Great Gatsby* is not 'a book to be read by the reader who believes the American girl to be the ideal girl of the Twentieth century.' (Bryer 195 qtd. in Sanderson 154) It is a book to understand the way men and society perceived the New American Woman, taking as an example Myrtle, Jordan and Daisy.

Fitzgerald's novel suggests that women had no identity in the modern world without the eyes of her beholder (Sanderson 154).

Returning to the subject presented in the previous section, women's emancipation: during the period that followed World War I, the American woman started a long process to liberate herself from patriarchy. The different stages of this emancipation are personified by the only three female characters in *The Great Gatsby*. Myrtle Wilson exemplifies the New Woman who is tired of following the traditional values and morals that her husband represents. However, she does not seek for total independence because either with her husband George B. Wilson, or with her lover Thomas Buchanan, Myrtle is always attached to a man. On the contrary, Jordan Baker, arrogant and irresponsible, is the living symbol for the principles of the flapper (Samkanashvili 47). Despite being Nick Carraway's girlfriend for the majority of the novel, Jordan enjoys the hedonist lifestyle that her career as a golfer brings her. Finally, Daisy Fay Buchanan is considered to be a hybrid between the traditional woman and the flapper. As explained on her article titled *The Role of Women in The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald*, Maia Samkanashvili considers that '(...) Daisy may have embodied the 1920's woman in transition between old and new values.' (47) Taking into account how Fitzgerald characterized Daisy's personality, it can be perceived as a critical approach to traditional morals still held by many women of his generation.

From the very beginning, Nick Carraway perceived all three women as impostors, because he considers that they are hiding their true selves behind their public figures '(...) the influence of the dress her personality had also undergone a change.' (Sanderson 155; Fitzgerald 38) Despite this, Nick does not criticize the three female characters equally because he approaches each of them differently.

Myrtle Wilson

When it comes to talk about the figure of Myrtle Wilson, Nick points out that ‘The intense vitality that had been so remarkable in the garage was converted into impressive hauteur.’ (Fitzgerald 38) He describes Myrtle as a low-class sexualized woman, who is less successful and a complete fraud (Sanderson 155). In addition, he considers that Myrtle is not at the same level as Daisy and Jordan, because for him, Myrtle is a mockery of everything she aspires to be (Sanderson 155). Nick’s impression implies that her appearance, her lifestyle and everything that surrounds her is vulgar. However, Myrtle is much more than what he describes. Indeed, the sexual encounters that Myrtle had with Tom Buchanan reveal many aspects of her personality. By cheating on Wilson, Myrtle’s proves that she is tired of her economic situation and her marriage. Like many other women during the American 1920’s, Myrtle’s main role in life would have been limited to housework and her husband (Samkanashvili 48). Nevertheless, Myrtle takes advantage of the more liberating environment, and starts to care about herself. She becomes Tom’s mistress, who provides her with expensive gifts and the feeling of freedom she needs. But, there is two sides to this story since Myrtle and Tom’s interests are different (Samkanashvili 48). She views their affair as a method to earn money and materialistic things that provides her economic prosperity and therefore, power (Samkanashvili 48). Also, Myrtle admits that she really likes Tom, since she dreams of a wedding if he divorces Daisy. This will cause her problems later. On the other hand, as stated by Samkanashvili, Tom plays a game in which Myrtle is just ‘his sex object kept on a leash of luxurious bestowments’ (48). He looks at Myrtle as a mere object to satisfy him, without realizing that she actually has feelings for him. Their conflicting interests lead to a misunderstanding, because Myrtle thought that he really loved her and that he would leave Daisy to be with her (Samkanashvili 48). Tom’s actions are criticized by Nick who told him that ‘Dishonesty in a woman is a thing you never blame deeply’ (Fitzgerald 64).

Tom is seen as a manipulator and a liar with the two women in his life, his mistress and his wife. Thereby, Myrtle is presented as foolish and dishonorable, because she cheated on her husband with Tom, who only used her for his own pleasure. Even more, considering that Tom is violent with her, since he even broke her nose during an argument about Daisy. Their affair does not end well for her, because her husband discovered what happened and locked her up at home. Mr. Wilson had another plans for them, as he said that 'she's going to stay there till the day after tomorrow and then we're going to move away.' (Fitzgerald 137). She responds with anger and fury, telling him to 'throw me down and beat me, you dirty little coward!' (Fitzgerald 138). Her desolation leads her to confront her husband, and ask him to physically abuse her, just as Mr. Buchanan previously did. Once again Myrtle's life depends on her husband, who imprisoned her at home without any decision-making power. This contributes to the idea that wives did not have the same authority as their husbands did (Samkanashvili 48). Her confinement leads her to a state of despair, which will push her to mentally and physically escape from her husband and the values he represents. This will be a fatal mistake because driven by her anxiety, Myrtle assumed that Tom was in a car that passed by her husband's workshop and, run towards him.

'The 'death car' as newspapers called it, didn't stop; it came out of the gathering darkness (...) to where Mrs. Wilson, her life violently extinguished, knelt in the road and mingled her thick, dark blood with the dust.' (Fitzgerald 138)

Sadly, it was not Tom. The car was driven by Daisy, who accompanied by Gatsby, ran over Myrtle. Nick's description of her dead and lifeless body also highlights the fact that Myrtle was seen as a mere piece of meat. This is because his explanation focused on

her breasts and mouth, something quite sexual to be describing a corpse ‘(...) her left breast was swinging loose like a flap and there was no need to listen for the heart beneath. The mouth was wide open and ripped at the corners (...)’ (Fitzgerald 138). Her character was trapped in the conception that men had of her, because even after her death, she was not contemplated as something more than a sexual object. Myrtle may have been seen as the most pessimistic version of the New Woman, as she ended up being unable to break free from the values and assumptions about herself. She embodied the woman whose life depended on men, either by force or economic reasons. This is why her search for freedom and success failed. Finally, her death would be considered as a crucial moment that will lead to a series of events culminating, anyhow, at the end of the novel.

Jordan Baker

Moving along, Nick Carraway’s approach is very different when it comes to describe and talk about Mrs. Baker. From the very beginning of the novel, he shows some kind of interest towards her. Thanks to his description of Jordan’s body and manners, one can easily assume that he desired her, which was confirmed when he said ‘I enjoyed looking at her’ (Fitzgerald 20). Nick’s attraction might be based on Mrs. Baker’s features: a peculiar mixture of feminine and masculine traits. Jordan’s aspect is presented as opposed to Daisy’s when Nick described her as:

‘(...) a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage which she accentuated by throwing her body backward at the shoulders like a young cadet. Her grey sun-strained eyes looked back at me with polite reciprocal curiosity out of a wan, charming discontented face (...) The lamplight, bright on his boots and dull on the autumn-leaf yellow of her hair, glinted along the paper as she turned a page with a flutter of slender muscles in her arms.’ (Fitzgerald 20, 26)

He is very precise on describing her, who is portrayed as a slim blonde woman with an athletic and boyish body, since he compares her with a 'young cadet'. Her physical characteristics coincide with those previously described as the prototypical features of the flapper movement. In such way, Nick focuses on describing Jordan's appearance, something that will be quite different when he talks about Daisy, considered to be her opposite.

Besides her features, Jordan's personality traits such as arrogance, irresponsibility and selfishness, show that she was a symbol for the principles of the flapper in the novel (Samkanashvili 47). Jordan Baker comes from Louisville, a city where she lived with Daisy, who remembers it with affection 'Our white girlhood was passed together there.' (Fitzgerald 27). Sadly, most of Jordan's family passed away and, according to Daisy 'her family is one aunt about a thousand years old' (Fitzgerald 27). Her aunt controls part of her money, since Jordan has surely earned a fortune playing golf. Despite appearing to be the most independent female character, Jordan also depends on someone's control. However, this does not stop her from doing what she wants. Following these lines, Nick's impressions on Jordan's background are also related with Fitzgerald's idea of the Southern womanhood (Fryer 45). As explained by Tom, her lack of family may have been one of the reasons why Jordan 'runs around the country this way.' (Fitzgerald 27) This refers to her lifestyle, which was based on attending parties, drinking, smoking and flirting with several men at the same time. But, all this would not be possible without her economic capacity to earn her own money. As it was mentioned, Jordan was a professional golfer, a sport considered to be for men. This relates to the breach of the gender barriers that the flappers represented, since many of them worked in masculine jobs, an action considered to be quite revolutionary at the time.

Jordan is portrayed as a free woman whose behavior was based on the values that characterized the flapper movement: personal and professional growth, economic independence and sexual freedom. She is probably one of the least important figures of the novel, but her presence helps to understand the rest of the characters, especially her friend and opposite character Daisy; and how Fitzgerald perceived the flapper through her descriptions. In conclusion, although she is not totally independent, Jordan's physical appearance and lifestyle show that she embodies the New Woman of the 1920's in *The Great Gatsby*.

Daisy Buchanan

Critics have generally dismissed the figure of Daisy Buchanan as the 'foolish' 'superficial' woman who embodies Jay Gatsby's dream wife (Fryer 43). However, she means significantly more. Mrs. Buchanan represents the conflict between traditional values and personal expectations: to marry a man who will take care for her against, the impulse towards independence and self-determination (Fryer 43). This is why Daisy is considered to be a hybrid between the New American Woman and the traditional one, since her personality and appearance present traits of both types. Entirely guided by Carraway's limited perspective, Daisy may seem as superficial, careless and irresponsible but, such a simplistic judgment of her personality shows that Nick does not realize what is going on (Fryer 43). He even admits to not understand what happens between Daisy and Tom when he said 'They were careless people, Tom and Daisy (...) whatever it was that kept them together' (Fitzgerald 177). Nick's observations show that Daisy accepts to be described that way since she wanted her daughter to be 'the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool' (Fitzgerald 26). Without a doubt, Daisy is trying to make a statement because she prefers her daughter to be 'fool' and 'beautiful' as the only way to

be happy 'in his world' ruled by men. This also reflects the pessimistic personality of Daisy, who despite being sad with her situation does nothing to change it.

Evidently, the misunderstanding between Nick and Daisy has its origins in Fitzgerald's confusion, because he admitted that 'Chapter 7 (the hotel scene) will never be up to the mark –I've worried about it too long and I can't quite place Daisy's reaction... I'm sorry Myrtle is better than Daisy' (Fitzgerald qtd. in Fryer 44). He did not know how to properly focus Daisy's character, and this can be perceived throughout the novel. As opposed to Myrtle Wilson and Jordan Baker, Nick's description on Daisy's appearance barely focuses on her physical features but on her voice. In fact, it is the first thing Carraway described when he met her '(...) her low thrilling voice. It was the kind of voice that the ear follows up and down as if each speech is an arrangement of notes that will never be played again' (Fitzgerald 18). This may be related to the fact that Nick does not really listen to what Daisy has to say. He is limited to describe the way she speaks and not what she actually says. Once this is understood, it is not a surprise that the communication between Nick and Daisy is unproductive.

Later in the novel Nick describes her physical features in opposition to Jordan's. Daisy has 'dark shining hair', 'bright eyes' and 'bright passionate mouth' (Fitzgerald 150, 18). She is portrayed as physically attractive but not in a sexual way as Myrtle was. Nick also talks about her manners and her fashionable taste. Her hair and clothing style entrust with the general characteristics of the flapper appearance. However, she is considered to be very different to Jordan, who as Daisy's opposite has blond hair and masculine body. Daisy's is a rather short description, taking into account the detailed definitions of the other two women. According to Sarah Beebe Fryer about Daisy's personality: 'In the opening chapter, Fitzgerald clearly indicates that Daisy embodies a war between hope and despair.' (48) Her inner conflict is based on Daisy's hope to know

what the future brings, even if it is something useless (Fryer 48). It can be interpreted as her desire for changes, but her pessimistic personality makes her think it will be worthless. Although she is frustrated over her marriage, she does not see an alternative to it (Fryer 55). Daisy's confusion was caused by social changes and gender rules during Fitzgerald's era (Fryer 55).

However, as the perception of these female characters always depends on a man's description, Daisy's characterization can change when Gatsby narrates. As Nick did, he also focused his attention on Daisy's voice, which was described as a '(...) voice is full of money.' (Fitzgerald 122) This relates to the luxurious lifestyle provided by Tom, something that also fascinates Gatsby. However, this will be a problem later, since Gatsby will realize that the Daisy he had fallen in love with does not exist anymore. Daisy had been corrupted by money and social position, which will lead her to stay with her husband instead of leaving with Gatsby. During an argument between Tom, Gatsby and Daisy, she said:

'Oh, you want too much!' she cried to Gatsby. 'I love you now — isn't that enough? I can't help what's past.' She began to sob helplessly. 'I did love him once — but I loved you too.' Gatsby's eyes opened and closed.' (133)

So, Daisy represents the New Woman in transition. She is not happy with her marriage and even cheats on her husband with Gatsby. However, she is unable to leave him, because he provides her with money and good reputation. She chooses money over love, thinking that it will give her the freedom and power she desires. But by rejecting Gatsby and staying with her husband, the opposite occurs since in any case, Daisy depends on a man.

The Great Gatsby represents the New American Woman through her three female characters. Although none of them is totally independent, all of them seek to distance themselves from traditional values, normally represented by men and society. In order to achieve this, they focus on the power of money. Ironically, what makes them prisoners is, to a greater or lesser degree, their economic dependency. This may be related to the idea that Fitzgerald himself had about women, who despite living in a time of strong social changes, still believed that all women relied on men to a certain extent.

4.2 *Flappers and Philosophers*

After his marriage with Zelda Sayre in April 1920, F. Scott Fitzgerald published his first collection of short stories in September of that same year under the name of *Flappers and Philosophers* (Curnutt 218). At its best, these stories were admired by many critics, who considered them to be the perfect example of comedy to recall the moral values of his flappers (Curnutt 6). However, not everyone had the same opinion. Some intellectuals criticized Scott because they believed that many of these stories were formulaic and commercial in order to attract his post-adolescence fan base (Curnutt 6). On his 1922 assessment of Fitzgerald, Edmund Wilson said that: ‘He has been given imagination without intellectual control of it; he has been given the desire for beauty without an aesthetic ideal; and he has been given the gift for expression without many ideas to express.’ (Wilson 404 qtd. in Curnutt 6)

This opinion on Fitzgerald’s capability was certainly not unusual since many critics considered him to be ‘wrapped up in his dream of himself’ at the height of his career (Wilson 404-407 qtd. in Curnutt 6). Thereby, most of the critical comments towards this collection of short stories were related with his unapologetic longing for the limelight (Curnutt 6). Likewise, in agreement with Kirk Curnutt’s opinion: ‘Had Fitzgerald not challenged himself to more substantive accomplishments, literary history might remember him alongside (...) writers whose racy flapper novels rode the cusp of the twentieth century’s first youth-culture.’ (6)

This short-fiction collection contains eight stories: ‘The Offshore Pirate’, ‘The Ice Palace’, ‘Head and Shoulders’, ‘The Cut-Glass Bowl’, ‘Bernice Bobs her Hair’, ‘Benediction’, ‘Dalyrimple Goes Wrong’ and ‘The Four Fists’. Although many times they are not protagonists, in most of these stories, the female characters that represent the

New American Woman. Whether it is because of their appearance or their manners, these women fit in with the flapper style.

A clear example of this is Ardita Farnam, from the first story in the collection entitled 'The Offshore Pirate'. As stated by the narrator of the tale 'this is not a story of two on an island, nor concerned primarily with love (...) It is merely the presentation of two personalities' (Fitzgerald 2673).² These two identities are those of Curtis Carlyle and the aforementioned Ardita Farnam. The story begins with a description of the female character as 'a yellow-haired girl' who is 'about nineteen, slender and supple' with a 'spoiled alluring mouth and quick grey eyes full of radiant curiosity' (Fitzgerald 2645). She is on a boat on her way to Florida 'stockingless, and adorned rather than clad in blue-satin slippers which swung nonchalantly from her toes' (Fitzgerald 2647). Ardita is always described as a beautiful girl with great style. Her companion was her uncle 'an elderly man topped with orderly gray hair and clad in a white-flannel suit' (Fitzgerald 2647). Her relative had arranged a meeting with Toby Moreland, a man from a wealthy family who wants to marry Ardita. But, she seems unbothered while 'reclined in a wicker settee reading *The Revolt of the Angels*' she sucks 'half a lemon that she held in her hand' (Fitzgerald 2647). It may not be a mere coincidence that Fitzgerald included a reference to Anatole France's book, because it may be related to the situation of the woman during the decade. Their circumstances can be compared to *Arcade's*, the protagonist of Anatole's novel, who is a fallen angel that after reading several books stops believing in God. Like the angel, the American woman experienced a change of mentality that led her to reject the old traditional values.

The male character, Curtis Carlyle is a fugitive who hijacks the ship helped by his men, the Six Black Buddies. He is described as 'a young man with a scornful mouth and

² The number of this in-text citation refers to the page of the book where this quotation is and, not to the year of publication of said book.

the bright blue eyes of a healthy baby set in a dark sensitive face' with 'pitch black, damp and curly' hair like if it was 'the hair of a Grecian statue gone brunette.' (Fitzgerald 2653). In contrast to his baby face, his body was 'trimly built, trimly dressed, and graceful as an agile quarterback' (Fitzgerald 2653). When the ship was being boarded, Ardita attracted by curiosity 'stared at him, speechless with astonishment.' (Fitzgerald 2653) During the course of her captivity, Mrs. Farnam does not feel intimidated by the band since in numerous occasions, she responds with authority: 'No, I won't get off the yacht. You can get off if you wish.' (Fitzgerald 2653) Her attitude irritated the assailants who tell 'if you will swear on your honor as a flapper — which probably isn't worth much — that you'll keep that spoiled little mouth of yours tight shut' (Fitzgerald 2654). This quote suggests that even the rest of the characters in the story perceive her as a woman who fits into the flapper movement. Based on the fascination that this episode caused on her, she admits to be bored and looking for new adventures. However, despite his admiration Ardita rejects Carlyle telling him that 'Perhaps if I were just a little bit older and a little more bored I'd go with you. As it is, I think I'll go back and marry — that other man.' (Fitzgerald 2676). Like Daisy Buchanan, Ardita rejects the adventurous man that she is attracted to, in order to be with another man. Despite that, at the end of the story it is shown that these two men have much in common because Curtis Carlyle and Toby Moreland is the same man. Surprised, Ardita tells him to 'lie to me just as sweetly as you know how for the rest of my life.' (Fitzgerald 2683).

Thanks to her appearance, her carefree nature and her fascination with adventures, Ardita embodies the flapper style and attitude that characterized the independent New American Woman of the 1920's.

This same role is played by Sally Carrol Happer of the second story in the collection entitled 'The Ice Palace'. This story takes place in the city of 'Tarleton in

southernmost Georgia, September afternoon' (Fitzgerald 2684). The protagonist, Sally Carrol Happer is a nineteen year old girl with 'bobbed corn-colored hair' who is dead of boredom at home (Fitzgerald 2684). As a result of her state of 'profound inertia', Sally engages herself to a 'tall, broad, and brisk' boy from the North named Harry Bellamy (Fitzgerald 2685, 2689). After surprising her friends with the new, a group of 'gracious, soft-voiced girls, who were brought up on memories instead of money', Sally moves with Harry to his house (Fitzgerald 2686). However, despite how much they love each other, Sally's visit does not last long. This is mainly due to two factors, the bad weather in the North compared to Tarleton and, the fact that her future mother-in-law did not like her. This is related to Sally's physical appearance and behavior. In fact, 'Harry's mother disapproved of her bobbed hair' and she did not tolerate Sally's smoking habits when she 'had come into the library sniffing violently' (Fitzgerald 2703). This show how different they were and the values that each of them represented. Sally was a girl with 'fluffy curls on her bobbed hair' who liked to 'rouge on her lips and grain of powder on her nose' when attending 'dinner-dance' parties (Fitzgerald 2689, 2685, 2687). But nevertheless, according to Sally, Mrs. Bellamy and her relatives '(...) are nothing. They just fade out when you look at them. They're glorified domestics. Men are the centre of every mixed group' (Fitzgerald 2703). Thus, she criticizes the traditional values that Harry's mother represents for her. In addition, 'Mrs. Bellamy seemed to typify the town in being innately hostile to strangers' and Sally Carrol described her as 'an egg with a cracked, veiny voice (...) that if she once fell she would surely scramble' (Fitzgerald 2703). Finally Sally returned to Tarleton.

In this story, the contrast between Mrs. Bellamy and Sally Carrol symbolizes the conflict between the values of the traditional woman and the young girl that embodied the New Woman of the 1920's.

Regarding the third story, named 'Head and Shoulders', it is important to mention that it might be the inspiration for the title of the entire collection *Flappers and Philosophers*. Fitzgerald may have relied on the opposition between the two concepts that these four terms represent, in order to call the attention of the audience. Some readers may assume the correspondence of these four terms, situating 'head' with 'philosophers' and 'flappers' with 'shoulders'. However, it is not a mere coincidence that Fitzgerald changed the order of the words when he named the collection, placing first in the title 'head' and 'flappers' and secondly, 'shoulders' and 'philosophers'. This means the change of the previously assumed roles, which is exactly the theme of this story.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the protagonists of this story are a philosophy enthusiast called Horace Tarbox and Marcia Meadow, a flapper dancer. She was nineteen, 'a blonde by natural pigment' with 'sweet smile' whose beauty was compared to that of angels: 'she didn't have wings (...) she didn't need them' (Fitzgerald 2716, 2717). Once again, Fitzgerald uses the symbol of the fallen angel in regards with the figure of the flapper, as he previously did with Ardita from 'The Offshore Pirate'. Two years younger than Marcia, Horace was 'tall and slender, with nearsighted gray eyes' and he was considered to be a 'prodigy extraordinary' in the field of philosophy (Fitzgerald 2715). They met during a joke in which Marcia asked him to kiss her several times, but it was in useless because Horace could not believe what was going on. This shows how open-minded she was, and the sexual freedom she had invited him to go see her performance at the theatre. On the other hand, he was described by Marcia as a 'smoked cigarette', alluding to the obvious moral tiredness of the boy (Fitzgerald 2719). Despite the situation, she invites him to see her performance. After several visits to the theater, both fall in love, and she confesses him that she was jealous of other girls since 'they knew what love was before I did' (Fitzgerald 2732). When he turns eighteen, they

get married to which some newspapers published that he was ‘throwing over his career (...) by marrying a chorus girl’ because he quit his job to move to America with her (Fitzgerald 2733). Consequently, she tells him that ‘we’ll call ourselves Head and Shoulders, (...) and the shoulders’ll have to keep shaking a little longer until the old head gets started.’ (Fitzgerald 2734). She means that she will move her shoulders dancing in order to provide for the, until Horace is able to return to his job in the academic field. However, she gets pregnant and these roles change. Marcia forgets about her dancing career and starts to write, she like it so much that she ends up publishing a successful book. On the other hand, Horace discovers his passion for gymnastics and ‘every evening delights the children at the Hippodrome with his wondrous flying performance.’ (Fitzgerald 2744) So according to this, the press publishes an article about them which says:

‘It is said that the young couple have dubbed themselves Head and Shoulders, referring doubtless to the fact that Mrs. Tarbox supplies the literary and mental qualities, while the supple and agile shoulder of her husband contribute their share to the family fortunes.’ (2744)

As Scott Fitzgerald suggests with his play on words, the roles of the flapper and the philosopher are interchangeable, which might be related with his own relationship with Zelda Sayre. Like Marcia, she starts writing and publishing her works during her marriage with Fitzgerald, clearly showing that her husband was inspired his female characters on her. In any case, Fitzgerald based the character of Marcia on the independent and disincensive flapper that seeks to find the love of her life without giving up her freedom. It should also be noted that during a part of the story she is in charge of earning money to maintain them, assuming the role that corresponds to man according to

traditional values. Something considered radical for the Victorian values, but admirable for the flapper movement.

The following short-story is entitled 'The Cut-Glass Bowl' and it is a narrative about the life of Evylyn Piper and her husband Harold Piper. The plot of the story revolves around the female character and a cut-glass bowl that decorates her home. As she explained once when Mrs. Roger Fairbolt visited her, the bowl had been a wedding present from Carleton Canby, Evylyn's ex-lover. When she told him she was going to marry Harold, he told her that he was '(...) going to give a present that's as hard as you are and as beautiful and as empty and as easy to see through.' (Fitzgerald 2747) After giving her the present, clarified Mrs. Piper, Mr. Canby left the town. Without being aware, Evylyn had accepted a gift that will be the central symbol during the most dramatic moments of her life. These events are mainly three, and they are approximately separated with a time span of ten years.

The first misfortune took place when Evylyn was twenty seven and a woman who most people would describe as beautiful. After Mrs. Roger Faibolt left the house, a man called Fred Gedney, came to talk to Mrs. Piper. It can be understood that both had had some type of encounter and that he came to see her again. However, during their conversation, Fred accidentally hit the cut-glass bowl with his arm, alerting Mr. Harold who knew what was going on. This will cause a dispute between Evylyn and Harold, who at the time was thirty-six and very handsome indeed. After this incident their relationship will never be the same again.

Secondly, the next problem regarding the bowl is starring Julie, the daughter of Harold and Evylyn. She hits her hand with the glass object, which caused her blood poisoning and finally, her hand has to be amputated. Evylyn was thirty-seven during this

event, 'her cheeks glowing and her high-piled hair gleaming with a suspicion of brilliantine' (Fitzgerald 2757).

When she turned forty-six, Evylyn's beauty 'had hesitated an her early thirties it came to an abrupt decision just afterward and completely left her' (Fitzgerald 2764). In addition, Mrs. Piper was 'wearying depression of living with a disappointed man' and Julie, who was 'growing more and more sensitive about her deformity' (Fitzgerald 2765, 2766). However, one of the news that will unleash the tragic final event was about to arrive. The couple had received a letter from the War Department, which the maid had placed inside the cut-glass bowl. The letter said that her son had died in the war to which Evylyn started 'smiling now, a very cruel smile' (Fitzgerald 2768). Tired of her situation, she talks to the cut-glass bowl as if to say: 'You know how cold I am and how hard and how beautiful, because once you were just as cold and hard and beautiful.' (Fitzgerald 2768) To which a voice from the bowl answered:

'You see, I am fate, (...) I am the flight of time and the end of beauty and unfulfilled desire; all the accidents and imperceptions and the little minutes that shape the crucial hours are mine. I am the exception that proves no rules, the limits of your control, the condiment in the dish of life.' (2769)

This caused Evylyn to carry the cut-glass bowl outside her house and, in an attempt to destroy it, she fell with the weight. The bowl broke and Mrs. Piper's life came to an end.

It is clear that the cut-glass was just a symbol of Evylyn's life before she got married, described as 'hard as you are and as beautiful and as empty and as easy to see through' (Fitzgerald 2747). Unknowingly, when Evylyn accepted the gift, she also

accepted the catastrophes that will take place in her life. Her beauty disappeared over time, her strong character vanished because of depression and, her transparency became opaque with the deceitfulness of her husband. All the characteristics that she once shared with the bowl were no longer a part of her.

In this story it is not very clear the presence of the New American Woman through the character of Evylyn. Anyway, it is worth noting the presence of elements that suggest that she could be a less traditional woman, since Mrs. Fairboalt is described as 'that ripe age where she distrusted all beautiful women' (Fitzgerald 2746, 2747). This suggests that she is a more traditional woman than Evylyn. Finally, in relation to her encounters, Mrs. Piper enjoys some type of sexual freedom since despite being married, she still meets other men. Thus, it can be concluded that Evylyn is different from other women in this short story, but she can not be considered part of the flapper movement.

Completely the opposite happens with the protagonist of the following story, whose title already gives a brief idea of the main female character: 'Bernice Bobs her Hair'. The central theme of this story is the change that Bernice undergoes when cutting her hair. She had never been a very popular girl, because despite being part of a wealthy family, many consider her to be boring and unexciting. Totally contrary to her is her cousin, she considered a beautiful, popular and vivacious girl. Fitzgerald portrayed Bernice as a girl who retains her mother's traditional values of what is female beauty, something that her cousin describes as a 'womanly woman' (Fitzgerald 2783). Bernice's appearance and adornment are criticized during her stay at her cousin's house, who takes her to a party with other boys and girls. All of them are very different from Bernice, since they enjoy jazz music with 'voices that sway to the plaintive African rhythm' (Fitzgerald 2771). In addition, many of the girls were "sometimes kissed in the parked limousines of unsuspecting dowagers," while many of the guys looked in their 'pocket for a cigarette'

(Fitzgerald 2771, 2772). This type of behavior was not something that Bernice was very familiar with and, even less with having sexual partners. This was something for which many people knew her cousin, who was used to have 'affairs with other boys' when she was not with Warren (Fitzgerald 2773). For all this, Marjorie criticizes Bernice trying to convince her to change. With this story, Fitzgerald aims to show how women perceive other women, and how the New Woman tries to change the model of femininity. Bernice accepts the her cousin's critic and accepts to transforms her appearance in order to change her behavior, because as Marjorie said 'if she looks like a million dollars she can talk about Russia, ping-pong, or the League of Nations and get away with it' (Fitzgerald 2784). The New Woman represented by the cousin believes that a girl's personality depends on her appearance. Finally, Bernice agrees to bob her hair the later on and changes her conservative clothing style with by wearing a 'dark red dress'(Fitzgerald 2788). She becomes the most popular girl and has a great time partying with her new friends. However, her cousin who is jealous tells her friends that Bernice is not going to bob her hair, that it is just a bluff. Bernice bobs her hair immediately because she was angry with Marjorie's affirmations. The haircut turns out as a disaster and Bernice's moment of glory is over. As revenge, she cuts Marjorie's braids off during her sleep and Bernice goes back home laughing at the situation 'Huh, - she giggled wildly. - Scalp the selfish thing!' (Fitzgerald 2801)

In this short story, Fitzgerald clearly depicts the characteristics that differentiate the New Woman from the traditional woman with Victorian values. Both, represented by Marjorie and Bernice, deal with the issue of femininity, identity and revenge from two opposite points of view. The arguments between the two cousins are an example of the conflicts created by the emerging type of womanhood and lifestyle of the 1920's.

Regarding the last three stories of the collection, 'Benediction', 'Dalyrimple Goes Wrong' and 'The Four Fists', they do not contain feminine characters that follow the values of the New American Woman, nor the aesthetics of the flapper. Although *Benediction* has a female protagonist named Lois, she has characteristics that are closer to the traditional values of the time. On the other hand, the other two stories mainly have male characters, with a quick mention of two women, who can not be included in the new social movement of the flapper.

Except these three tales, the collection of short stories *Flappers and Philosophers* delves in the figure of the New Woman according to F. Scott Fitzgerald's vision. Besides helping the reader to understand both sides, the opposition between traditional and liberal values through his female characters makes Scott's stories seem authentic and more realistic. One way or another, the female characters represented in these stories share the same values that the flapper movement did.

4.3. *All the Sad Young Men*

After the favourable outcome and success of *The Great Gatsby*, the publication of the collection of short stories *All the Sad Young Men* (1926) might have been a disappointment for many readers (The New York Times 1). The book as a whole did not sustained to the high reader's expectations but, it does contain stories of 'fine insight and finished craft' (1). F. Scott Fitzgerald, the philosopher of the flappers, has also been occupied with the affairs of young men for some time (1). From Amory in *This Side of Paradise* to Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby*, he pictured the efforts of these 'sad young men' to escape from the beauty, love and ladies (1). In fact, he continues with this theme in *All the Sad Young Men* which includes: 'The Rich Boy', 'Winter Dreams', 'The Baby Party', 'Absolution', 'Rags Martin-Jones and the Pr-Nce of W-Les', 'The Adjuster', 'Hot and Cold Blood', 'The Sensible Thing' and 'Gretchen's Forty Winks'. F. Scott Fitzgerald calls out his overgrown flappers in his stories 'Rags Martin-Jones and the Pr-Nce of W-Le's and 'The Adjuster', in which these gracious and selfish young women discover that this world is not their special toy (1).

However, this figure briefly appears in other stories within the collection. One of them is 'The Rich Boy', which despite having a male protagonist called Anson Hunter, also includes important female characters such as Paula Legendre and Dolly Karger. Mrs. Karger was physically described as a 'dark-haired, with carmine lips and a high, lovely color, which she concealed under pinkish-gray powder all through the first year out, because high color was unfashionable' (Fitzgerald 1876). More than that, 'the girl was of a wild, impulsive nature, and she was flattered by Anson's confidences' (Fitzgerald 1872). Together with these two characters, at the end of the plot, appears a new female character described as 'a girl in the red tam (...) pretty (...) with a flashing

bob on her head' (Fitzgerald 1903). Along these lines, these three women represent, to a certain extent, the figure of the flapper and the new women within the story because they are described as independent middle-class women with a certain lifestyle and physical appearance. Some details that support these ideas are the facts that Dolly has a car; also that some of them smoked and went to parties and, finally that sometimes they were described as naïve. All of these characteristics might be indicators that these women represented the New Woman in the short story 'The Rich Boy'.

As regards the story 'Rags Martin-Jones and the Prince of Wales', the figure of the flapper is embodied by Rags Martin-Jones, a millionaire girl who had a friendship with John M. Chestnut. After five years without seeing one another, Rags returned to the United States to visit her friend. Her excessive beauty flooded the pier, when the ship in which she travelled, arrived in New York. The beauty of the girl is disproportionate and supernatural since according to the story:

'A few porters fainted. A large, sentimental shark which had followed the ship across made a despairing leap to see her once more, and then dove, broken-hearted, back into the deep sea' (Fitzgerald 1970)

Details about her physical appearance suggest that she was a beautiful woman with scant boy's hair and, a face that 'was like seven o'clock on a wedding morning' (Fitzgerald 1970). She was bored and happy laughing slipping a 'preposterous monocle into an eye of clear childish blue' that would be tilted out by her long lashes (Fitzgerald 1969, 1970). In addition, the narrator of the story says that 'Rags Martin-Jones was not a dog. She was half a girl and half a flower (...)' (Fitzgerald 1969). This suggests that Rags was not only beautiful but also smelled good, perhaps like a perfume of fragrant

flowers. Her clothing style is in line with her lifestyle: ‘a dress made in great splashy checks of sea-blue and gray’, ‘a gold dress and the slippers with the real gold heels’ and ‘all the pearls, and the egg-diamond and the stockings with the sapphire clocks’ are some of the elements of her garment (Fitzgerald 1970, 1976). In addition, Rags also has a nail artist and a Parisian hairdresser who take care of her appearance any time she needs them. She is able to have this excessive lifestyle because on her tenth birthday, she inherited a fortune of seventy-five millions after both her parents ‘had gone down on the Titanic together rather than be separated in this world’ (Fitzgerald 1970). At a young age she was left alone with such a big fortune, which most people considered to be a shame (Fitzgerald 1970). This totally independent woman grow tired of ‘a nightclub and a bottle of sugary mousseaux’, nothing could impress her (Fitzgerald 1975).

Aware of her demanding friend, John M. Chestnut who was in love with Rags, organized a party in a nightclub, to which the Prince of Wales was supposedly invited. However, none of this turned out to be true. John had organized a fake party to impress Rags and show her that he also had a lot to offer her. Really impressed with John's disguise, Rags thanked him ‘for the second greatest thrill of my life’ (Fitzgerald 1989). Finally, the young girl accepts what John has to offer her:

‘Well, m’selle, to-day we have some perfectly bee-oo-tiful love.’ ‘Wrap it up, Mr. Merchant,’ cried Rags Martin-Jones. ‘It looks like a bargain to me.’ (1989)

In this brief story of conquest, the female protagonist embodied by Rags Martin-Jones is an example of the figure of the new woman of the 1920’s. Not only does her physical appearance correspond to that of a flapper, but also her previously described lifestyle and manners.

The next short story is 'The Adjuster', a narration in which Fitzgerald focuses on 'one of the many flaws in the scheme of human relationships that selfishness in women has an irresistible appeal to many men' (Fitzgerald 2003). The narration is about the relationship between Luella and Charles Hemple, a married couple whose lives change at the drop of a hat. The plot begins with Mrs. Hemple's conversation with a friend of her, Mrs. Alphonse Karr. Luella is described as a twenty-three year old, 'tall with the sort of flaxen hair that English country girls should have' (Fitzgerald 1993). She was also characterized as someone very fashionable since 'this was the year 1920 — she had powdered out its high roses and drawn on it a new mouth and new eyebrows' (Fitzgerald 1993). Regarding her clothing style, she was wearing a dress, a 'black immaculate affair with the big buttons and the red ghost of a cape at the shoulders' (Fitzgerald 1992). All these characteristics suggest that Mrs. Hemple was a woman who lived in harmony with the lifestyle of the 20s. She also smoked, liked to dance in cocktail parties and attended the theatre. In addition to her features, together with Mrs. Alphonse Karr, they are said to 'had done very well for themselves' (Fitzgerald 1993). This suggests that they belonged to the upper-middle class and that both achieved it by themselves. However, not everything was perfect in Luella's life because in spite of living a supposedly happy life, she was not satisfied. Her three-year marriage to Mr. Hemple and the baby they had did not pleased her. She did not like taking care of the baby or the house, neither cooking. All of that bored her. However, as Luella herself confessed: 'It's the very fact that I do love Charles that complicates matters. (...) we're drifting slowly but surely toward a divorce. It's the baby that keeps us together' (Fitzgerald 1993). In fact, she really loved her husband, but the situation at home and with the baby surpassed her. As a consequence, she realized that she hated her husband's shortcomings such as 'rubbing his face with his hand — all the time, at table,

at the theatre — even when he's in bed' (Fitzgerald 1995). However, after a series of events such as the death of her baby and the illness of her husband, Luella learned how to be happy again with the help of Doctor Moon. She became aware of her previous selfishness and arrogance, to which the Mr. Moon said:

‘We make an agreement with children that they can sit in the audience without helping to make the play,’ he said, ‘but if they still sit in the audience after they're grown, somebody's got to work double time for them, so that they can enjoy the light and glitter of the world. (...) Happy things may come to you in life, but you must never go seeking them anymore.’ (2016, 2017)

Finally, Luella asked Doctor Moon who he was, to which he responded: ‘who am I?’ he repeated; ‘I am five years’ (Fitzgerald 2017). Mrs. Hemple discovered that she had matured during this process, that now she had wrinkles and that together with Charles ‘they walked into the nursery where the two children were waiting up to say good night’ (Fitzgerald 2018).

In this short story titled ‘The Adjuster’, the female protagonist Luella tried to escape from her unhappy situation without being aware that the problem was within herself. It was not until years later, that she realized her mistakes and her selfishness. In this way, Luella was able to see that all her problems would not be solved by leaving her family but making changes in her mindset. F. Scott Fitzgerald created the character of Mrs. Hemple as a selfish, vain, carefree girl who learns that she will never be happy if she continues to act like that. In a way, Luella personifies the flapper who seeks her happiness and independence without caring about others. This could be seen as a critic to the flapper movement because, as it was previously mentioned, selfishness was to F.

Scott Fitzgerald ‘one of the many flaws in the scheme of human relationships’ (Fitzgerald 2003).

Compared with the two previously analysed books, *The Great Gatsby* and *Flappers and Philosophers*, the collection of short stories *All the Sad Young Men* results in a shift over another Fitzgerald’s plays. These tales contain a wider range of topics, though weaker, all deal with serious, Gatsby-related subjects such as lost ideals, strained marriages and material success (Prigozy 70). Even some of these tales such as ‘The Rich Boy’ and ‘Winter Dreams’ have direct ties to Gatsby’s story (Prigozy 70). Nevertheless, according to the analysis above-made, the gimmicky flapper stories so often related with F. Scott Fitzgerald’s tales are almost inexistent in *All the Sad Young Men* (Prigozy 70). Thus, as reported by The New York Times:

‘It is also time that Fitzgerald be given credit for creating other than youthful characters; his elderly people are excellent portrayals. He has written a book of mellow, mature, ironic, entertaining stories, (...) that challenge the best of our contemporary output.’ (1)

5. Conclusion: End of the Flapper Era

Before interpreting the results of this dissertation, it is crucial to mention that the present study was designed to determine the importance of the figure of the Flapper, not only in the American society of the Roaring Twenties, but also in F. Scott Fitzgerald's literary production.

In order to get a deeper understanding on the situation, this investigation set out to consider the historical framework in which the New Woman had emerged. The results of this investigation show that, both the economic prosperity of the decade and the National Prohibition surfaced as reliable predictors of the changing role of women in society. Also, the emergence of a new lifestyle is clearly supported by these findings. Along these lines, this study has found that, despite the importance of the flapper style in artistic fields, a big segment of the population did not like the flapper-trend. Multiple findings show that conservative American citizens considered these women to be radical and inappropriate. However, taken together, it seems that the emergence of this figure was the main point of discussion during the decade.

After the analysis of several female characters extracted from Fitzgerald's stories, some conclusions can be drawn. Nevertheless, given that our findings are based on a limited number of literary works, the results from such analysis should be treated with considerable caution. As expected, these findings were often contradictory, depending on the book that was being analyzed.

When examining *The Great Gatsby*, the most obvious finding to emerge is that the female characters are as important as their male counterparts. As it was previously explained, this statement would contradict Fitzgerald's perception of his own female characters, which he described as irrelevant figures. Nevertheless, this dissertation

provides additional evidences to support that Daisy Buchanan, Jordan Baker and, surprisingly, Myrtle Wilson play a very important role within the novel.

Disappointingly, our research failed to give an explanation on the importance of the figure of the flapper in the two collections of short stories. In the case of *Flappers and Philosophers*, many stories did have a flapper-like figure such as Ardita from 'The Offshore Pirate'. However, what is surprising is that, most of these women in *All the Sad Young Men* were not figures with significant relevance. Plainly, many of them are secondary characters that remain in the background of these stories. Nevertheless, this is not particularly surprising taking into account the lack of female characters in most of the stories from these collections. Thereby, one can understand the differences between the female characters from Fitzgerald's books, as a consequence of the above-mentioned transition within his literary production.

It is plausible that a number of limitations concerning the lack of past research on this topic might have influenced these results. In this way, it has been impossible to prove that the figure of the Flapper was a symbol of woman's freedom. Therefore, further studies will help to estimate to what extent the figure of the flapper influenced Fitzgerald's literary production. In order to validate this, it will be necessary to completely analyze his authoring in search of flapper-like features among his female characters. On a wider level, the prospect of being able to do so, serves as an impulse for future research to determine if any reminiscence of this character is still present in the American literature.

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